

BOOK REVIEWS

THE SHAME OF THE STATES. By Albert Deutsch. Harcourt, Brace and Company, New York, 1948. \$3.00.

Albert Deutsch's book is an outgrowth of a series of articles on current conditions in state mental hospitals which he wrote for the New York Star. It is a journalistic survey with a camera-documented story of conditions in public mental hospitals. The author is a leader in the field of humanitarian journalism. His earlier book, "The Mentally Ill in America—A History of Their Care and Treatment from Colonial Times," provided a good background for his investigations.

The author states that he visited about two-score mental institutions, but he reports on only about a dozen. The faults of these institutions are primarily reported. The statistical data are meagre. The presentation of facts is journalistic in manner. An interpretive formulation to account for the defects is put forth. The blame is laid at the doorsteps of the state hospital system. The author emphasizes that in the final analysis the public is responsible for it. The primary purpose of the book is to acquaint the public with the need for and to arouse support toward reform of state mental institutions.

A few criticisms may be ventured. The reviewer happens to have visited five of about the dozen mental institutions which were reported on. While admitting of the great need for tremendous improvement, in some instances the defects were somewhat exaggerated, the services minimized, and the limitations were not sufficiently appreciated by the author. In places, attempts are made to secure emotional appeal rather than to present neutral facts.

Nevertheless, the book for the most part correctly describes a great need in a popular way. It fills a gap in public education between the newspaper "asylum horror tale" and the colorless scientific statistics of professional research. It is a book that can be recommended to be read by all, lay as well as professional people.

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THE RENAL ORIGIN OF HYPERTENSION. By Harry Goldblatt, M.D., C.M., Director, Cedars of Lebanon Hospital, Professor of Pathology, University of Southern California. Charles C. Thomas, Publisher, Springfield, Illinois, 1948. \$2.75.

From time to time since his first reports on the experimental production of arterial hypertension, Goldblatt has reviewed critically the pertinent literature and presented his own views. In this short monograph, one of the American Lecture Series, he indicates clearly why he believes human essential hypertension to be of renal origin. Not as detailed as previous reviews of the subject by Goldblatt or others, and without the "practical" aspects so often desired by practitioners, the book seems very well suited to the student of medicine whether he be in practice or in medical school.

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MANUAL OF PUBLIC HEALTH—HYGIENE. By J. R. Currie, M.D., Professor-Emeritus of Public Health, University of Glasgow, and A. G. Mearns, M.D., Senior Lecturer and Examiner in Hygiene, University of Glasgow. Third edition. 212 illustrations, four color plates. The Williams and Wilkins Company, Baltimore, 1948. \$9.00.

This comprehensive text on hygiene from the British viewpoint pretty well covers the field of preventive medicine and what is called by Oxford "Social Medicine" and Cambridge "Human Ecology."

"Hygiene" is designed for medical and public health students and for practitioners of public health. The definitions given are usually legal in nature. For example,

mental defectiveness is defined as "a condition of arrested or incomplete development of mind existing before the age of 18 years." In whatever field of hygiene there are laws or regulations, the gist of these is given.

The major part of the work is devoted to the basic functions of organized public health service, such as maternal and child health, statistics, food hygiene, housing, and industrial and mental hygiene. There is an excellent section on food poisonings of various types with good color illustrations. The chapter on "Community Diseases" is unique in its scope.

The last chapter of the book entitled "The Social Vista" gives a factual statement of the various insurance and public assistance laws, and the relationship of the general practitioner and public health officer to these laws is indicated.

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AN EVALUATION OF SELECTED SCHOOLS OF NURSING WITH RESPECT TO CERTAIN EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES. By Helen Nahm, Director of the Division of Nursing Education, Duke University, Durham, N. C. Published for the American Psychological Association by Stanford University Press, 1948. \$2.00.

This is essentially a statistical report on many questions posed to determine whether student nurses are satisfied with nursing as a profession, whether or not professional nurses: are democratic rather than autocratic in their beliefs and practices, apply principles of mental hygiene, are well adjusted, have a wide range of social, cultural and recreational interests and activities, and are interested in and understand current social, political and economic problems and issues.

For many years nursing educators have agreed on desirable objectives of nursing education. The author chose a limited number of them and administered questionnaires to 428 senior students in 12 schools of nursing in Minnesota. Of this number, 27 per cent were enrolled in degree programs and 73 per cent in three-year programs.

Since hundreds of test items were used and the results of many are tabulated and graphed, only by studying the questions and the responses carefully can one glean specific information on the test results.

In general, the conclusions are not surprising. The findings seem to indicate that first and foremost there is need for better preparation of faculty members for schools of nursing, that many schools of nursing are not being conducted as truly educational institutions, that an authoritarian rather than democratic philosophy prevails in some schools, that shorter hours of work are needed as well as better health supervision and programs, and that there is a necessity for improved recreational and social facilities.

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MANUAL OF CLINICAL LABORATORY METHODS. By Opal E. Hepler, Ph.D., M.D., Associate Professor of Pathology, Northwestern University Medical School. With foreword by James P. Simonds, Ph.D., M.D. Charles C. Thomas, Publisher, 201 East Lawrence Ave., Springfield, Illinois, 1949. \$8.50.

This book is an expanded outline of laboratory methods prepared for use in the teaching of medical students and laboratory technicians. It is not designed to be a textbook of clinical pathology and does not discuss the clinical significance of the results of the tests.

The reviewer can give this book high praise: it does what it sets out to do and serves a most useful purpose. It may be highly recommended for any laboratory, for technicians and for medical students; but it is for the small laboratory